

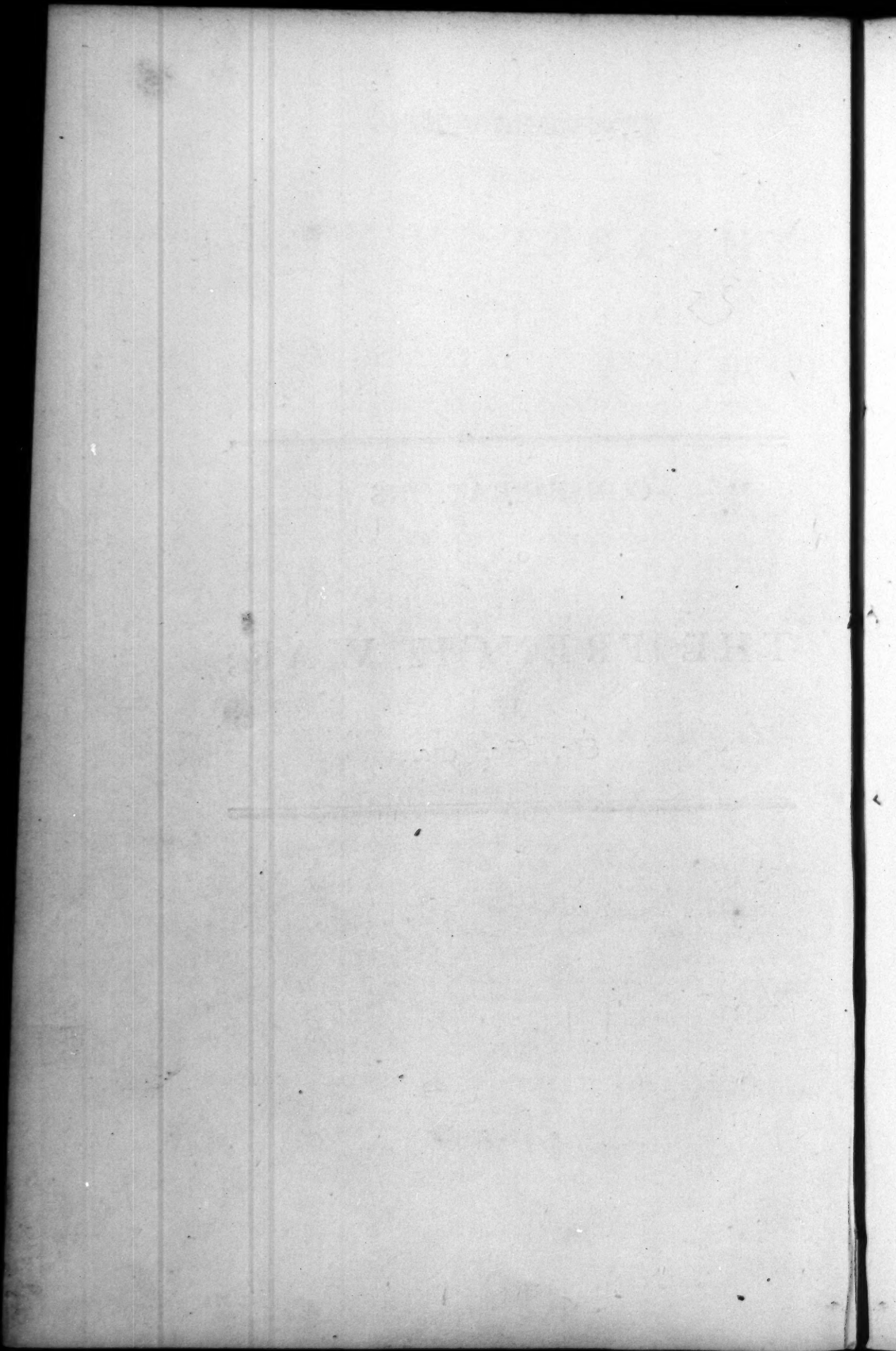
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CONSIDERATIONS

O N

THE FRENCH WAR;

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CONSIDERATIONS
O N
THE FRENCH WAR,
IN WHICH
THE CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO IT,
ITS OBJECT,
And the Resources of Britain
FOR CARRYING IT ON, ARE
EXAMINED, IN
A LETTER,
TO THE RT. HONBLE. WILLIAM PITT,
By A BRITISH MERCHANT.

WHAT KING GOING TO MAKE WAR AGAINST ANOTHER KING
SITTETH NOT DOWN FIRST, AND CONSULTETH, WHETHER HE BE
ABLE WITH TEN THOUSAND, TO MEET HIM THAT COMETH AGAINST
HIM WITH TWENTY THOUSAND? OR ELSE, WHILE THE OTHER IS
YET A GREAT WAY OFF, HE SENDETH AN AMBASSAGE AND DESI-
RETH CONDITIONS OF PEACE.—*St. Luke*, chap. XIV. v. 31, 32.

London,

PRINTED FOR D. I. EATON, NO. 74, NEWGATE-STREET

M,DCC,XC,IV.

CONSIDERATIONS
ON
THE FRENCH WAR,
IN WHICH

THE CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO IT,
ITS OBJECT,

And the Resources of Britain
FOR CARRYING IT ON, ARE



TO THE R. HON. WILLIAM PITT,
BY A BRITISH MERCHANT.

190

WHAT KINE GOING TO MAKE WAS A GREAT QUESTION
BETWEEN THE DOCK MASTERS, AND CONSIDERED BY THE
ADMIRALTY WITH THE THOROUGHNESS OF A MAN OF WAR.
HIS WITH TWENTY THOUSANDS OF MEN, WHILE THE OTHER
WAS A GREAT WAY OFF, HE STOOD BY THE ANCHOR AND
AFTER CONSIDERING OF THE MATTER—HE DECIDED UPON IT.

London.

PRINTED FOR D. L. EATON, NO. 25, NEWCASTLE STREET.

M.DCC.XCIV.

Contents,

INTRODUCTORY observations,	1
Reasons for doubting of the abilities of the minister,	
As a Statesman,	2
As a Financier,	3
Principles of the Minister <i>before</i> and <i>after</i> he came into office,	5
Conduct of the Minister respecting the reform of parliament,	6
The Slave Trade,	7
The repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts,	8
The French Revolution,	9
Of Mr. Burke's book,	10
Of Mr. Paine's book,	11
Of political societies,	12
Of the modern division of parties,	14
Of the proclamations, insurrections, and prosecutions for sedition,	ibid
Enemies to the War, falsely called <i>Jacobins</i> ,	18
<i>Equality</i> wilfully misapplied,	ibid
Of the War with France,	19
Object of Austria and Prussia,	20
Our conduct was the first declaration of war,	23
Of our object in going to war, with remarks on the king's declaration,	24
Danger of the war,	33
The allies cannot conquer France,	37
The French used to arms,	38
A great majority in favor of a Republic,	39
The French in no want of money,	43

Revolutions generally attended with a season of anarchy and unsettled government, ———	44
Of the resources of Britain to carry on the war, and the general state of our finances, ———	47
The prosperity of our commerce depends on the circula- tion of paper, and country Banks, ———	51
Business of a country bank explained, ———	53
Conduct of the Bank of England on the prospect of war, and the origin and progress of the late mercantile dis- tress, ——— ———	56
The check given to commerce cannot easily be recovered, ———— ——— ———	59
The prosperity of Britain depends <i>solely</i> on its commerce, ———— ——— ———	61
Prospect on the Meeting of Parliament, and conclusion, ———— ——— ———	63

CONSIDERATIONS
ON
THE FRENCH WAR, &c.
IN A
LETTER,

To the Rt. Hon. WILLIAM PITT.

SIR,

I Make no apology for addressing you in this public manner. We have long been taught in this free country, that the public measures of public men, may be examined into and censured, without offending against its laws. Whoever is raised to the post of high trust and power which now *you* hold, must expect to have his conduct minutely investigated, and he has no just reason to be offended, if some of his fellow citizens should take the liberty of expostulating with him upon it. You have told us in words, but still more strongly by your actions, that there never was a crisis of greater danger to our happy Constitution, than that, which now hangs over us. This then is no time for compliment.

B

Against you, Sir, I feel no personal resentment, but no false delicacy shall hinder me from giving my sentiments respecting your late public measures without disguise. I boast of no superior talents or means of information, except such as my humble situation affords me, and venture with diffidence, to offer to the public, the observations of a private individual upon matters of the highest importance to us all. I cannot however refrain from indulging a feeble ray of hope that they will not be found altogether unworthy of attention, and that they may assist the endeavors of rational men to arrest the progress of public ruin.

It is not necessary for a British merchant to be a professed politician, but politics and commerce are so often blended together, that the reading of a newspaper is almost a necessary part of his daily occupation. The taste, thus acquired in early life, has not deserted me in riper years, and the history of my own country, continues to be, the principal amusement of my leisure hours. Your public character and conduct, has therefore, not passed unnoticed, and though I could never be persuaded to believe, as some of your enemies have professed to do, that there is no principle you would not sacrifice, or meanness you would not practise to keep your situation, and that there is no friend you would not give up, to gratify the pursuits of ambition; yet, my own observation induces me to look with a jealous eye to all your measures. As a statesman you openly opposed, and then covertly adopted, the provisions of Mr. Fox's India Bill. When you arrogantly brought forward as a perfect model, *not to be altered in a single word*, a set of ill digested propositions, to serve for the basis of a commercial intercourse with Ireland; the alterations they afterwards underwent in the House of Commons, ought to have taught you humility. But after declaring, that without some arrangement, *it was impossible* that the com-

merce of the two countries could go on, we were surprised (because your character was not *then* sufficiently understood) at your abandoning them altogether.—With respect to foreign Countries, we have seen you act with equal inconsistency; we have seen you boldly advance and throw down the guantlet to Russia, and, when your challenge was accepted, submissively retire. We have seen you prepare for war against Spain, and upon receiving a sort of half apology for her misconduct, drop all hostilities. The people of England saw you act the part of Pistol with great complacency and indulgence. They paid almost without a murmur, the expences incurred by these ridiculous gasconades, to an amount, which would have bought for ever the paltry town of Ochachoff and all its dependencies, together with Nootka Sound and its imports and exports till the day of judgment; and after all, Ochachoff remains in the possession of Russia; and Nootka Sound, and the property of British subjects are still withheld by Spain. From these facts (confirmed by others which I shall observe upon hereafter) doubts may be entertained, whether your talents are adapted to the government of a mighty Empire, for in you we discern none of those great leading features of the mind, which exalt one fortunate man above his fellows, and mark him out for dignity and rule.

I have dwelt the more shortly upon your character as a *Statesman*, because it is as a *Financier* chiefly that we hear your praises chaunted in the City, and because there I feel myself more competent to form a judgment of your powers. When raised to your high office, the American war was over, this country was beginning to recover from an almost bankrupt State, there was a vast load of unfunded debt to be cleared off, and new taxes to be laid to pay the interest of it, and provide for the de-

iciencies of former years. You did indeed clear the market of the unfunded debt, by changing it into a five per cent Stock, but you so little understood the terms you offered, that the holders made twenty per cent profit, and laughed at your wasteful prodigality. That you have imposed taxes with an unsparing hand is readily admitted, but we can admire your skill in laying them, neither in the subjects you have selected nor the mode of enforcing payment. It was by an increase of the commerce of Britain alone, that there was any prospect of increasing the taxes, so as to bring the public income to a level with the expenditure. Your taxes upon *Calicoes*, *Shops*, and *Coals*, were therefore all impolitic ones, and you have been convinced of it; the tax upon *maid Servants* was cruel, as well as impolitic; and that upon *Carts*, and *Waggons*, a heavy burden upon Agriculture, already too much distressed. The taxes upon *Gloves* and *Perfumery* are in the highest degree vexatious in the collection; and the new mode of laying the *Post Horse tax*, has introduced a dangerous and unconstitutional precedent. Spies and informers now swarm in every part of the kingdom, and distrust and discontent, pervade the habitations of tradesmen and innkeepers. But the bringing of *tobacco* and *wine* under the excise laws, is a melancholy proof either of the very critical situation of this Kingdom, or of your contempt of those principles which Englishmen have been taught to reverence. The attempt to add these two articles to the list of exciseable commodities was given up by Sir Robert Walpole, because he apprehended popular Commotions; but you more powerful, or the spirit of the people more subdued, have effected it, not only without bloodshed, but almost without opposition. During your administration the public revenue has been increased, but the public spirit of the people has been broken; you have

paid great attention to the raising of money—but none to cherishing in Englishmen an affection for the Constitution.

But it is said that you excel in the details and calculations respecting Commerce. I suspect that you are deficient in both. When the Callicoe tax was in agitation, I remember well, that you surprised mercantile people, by contending, that it was the same thing whether an article of commerce came to the consumer wholly untaxed, or was taxed to any amount in the first stage of its manufacture, provided the tax was drawn back upon the sale. You displayed the same ignorance when the Irish propositions were under consideration, and conceived that British Glass which pays a heavy excise duty on its first process, would be put upon an equal footing in the Irish market, with Irish glass which pays none, by barely permitting the amount of that duty to be drawn back upon the importation or sale of it. When you proposed to liquidate part of the national debt by appropriating a million a year for that purpose, your idea met with general approbation; but after you had consulted the late Dr. Price, who, whatever might be his character as a politician, stood unrivalled in calculations respecting finances, it was no proof of your sagacity that you selected the *worst*, and *least efficacious* of the plans he submitted to your consideration. Whether in the present situation of Europe, any plan was likely to be successful, may admit of some doubt.

An estimate of your public character, from your public conduct may not be precisely accurate, but the great outlines will be sufficiently marked, to prevent any material mistake. To consider you as the *greatest* man of the age, may become the partiality of your private friends; to deny you the credit of possessing even brilliant talents would

be justified by no degree of hostility. Your conduct in the present emergency of public affairs at home and abroad, will be found perfectly characteristic. Before you came into power, your principles were presumed, from your public conduct, to be of the most democratic cast ; you was a professed enemy to the influence of the Crown, and had moved in the House of Commons, for a reform in the representation of the people in Parliament, and at your accession to office, you stood pledged *as a Minister and as a Man*, honestly and boldly to support such reform, whenever it should be proposed. Some of your friends did not think this pledge was made with your usual prudence, and others have since suspected the honesty of it. It certainly was difficult to reconcile it with the cool caution, which has upon subsequent occasions marked your character. So pledged however, you gained the summit of your wishes, and your first step was not an auspicious omen either of your attachment to your friends, or steadiness to your principles. You prostituted the Peerage for the purchase of votes in the House of Commons, and then advised a dissolution of the parliament *in direct breach of a solemn promise made in your name by Mr. Banks*, and called upon the people as they affected the prerogative of the Crown, in opposition to the rights of the Commons, to return your friends at the new election. Your success exceeded your most sanguine expectations, and the dissenters, even Dr. Price and Dr. Priestly, whom it has been the fashion of late, to stigmatize as *republicans*, distinguished themselves in canvassing to support those *prerogatives*.

The democratic principles, which had served as a ladder for your ambition, were now become useless. Mr. Sawbridge's honest perseverance, forced you to renew the motion for a parliamentary reform, in a specific proposition so exceptionable from the temptation it held out to corrupt

Corporators to betray their trust, that it was impossible it should succeed. And you have not scrupled to oppose the motions of Mr. Sawbridge, Mr. Flood, and Mr. Grey, because forsooth, they could none of them discover *the proper time* to agitate the question. Neither in war nor in peace could the time be proper, because *you were in office*. In the debate on Mr. Sawbridge's motion, you stated that the American war had been obstinately pursued, till the nation was reduced to the very verge of public Bankruptcy, *because the people were not sufficiently represented!* Mr. Grey's motion it should seem then, was particularly well-timed, for it was made *at the commencement of a war*, in which an improper degree of pertinacity in the Legislature, must necessarily lead to the same fatal consequences. It may however, *if you should chance to be out of office*, perhaps, give us an opportunity of hearing the distresses of your country described with your former eloquence, and a reform again recommended by you as their only cure. Not chusing to give up all claim to popularity with your former friends, you have thought it expedient to give *apparently* a vigorous support to Mr. Wilberforce's motion for the abolition of the Slave Trade; we know that you have made noble declamations in praise of liberty, and the rights of man, but we know that you have never made even ordinary exertions to secure a majority of votes in its favour. When Mr. Beaufoy gave notice of a motion for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, you evaded any declaration of your sentiments, until the Bishops made it your interest to oppose it. This however was done so artfully, that the Dissenters flattered themselves you was not in the main an enemy to their claims. But when the motion was renewed by Mr. Fox with a considerable prospect of success, the mask was thrown off, many of your personal friends withdrew their support, you

founded the alarm of *danger to the Church*, and then excused your apostacy by the ferment you had raised.

About this time the French revolution shook the Court, the Church, and the privileged orders with alarm; and a Champion was found hardy enough to attempt the extirpation of those principles, you had not yet wholly discarded, and to bring into popular odium those persons, who dared still to avow them. Mr. Burke issued forth like a Knight Errant of old, not indeed to destroy Dragons and Giants, but upon a more arduous undertaking, to destroy in the hearts of Englishmen all regard to the RIGHTS OF MAN. It was impossible the attempt could succeed, for Englishmen must lose all memory and sense, before they can be persuaded that the revolution was a rebellion, the Constitution an act of arbitrary power, and our beloved monarch an Usurper. Moreover the attempt was ill timed, for you and your friends had been active in spreading the doctrine of the Rights of Man, over every part of the Kingdom. You had proposed in Parliament an enlargement of the elective franchise, and recommended associations *out of it*, to give effect to your scheme; and Petitions for the abolition of the slave trade had been eagerly sought for, from every village between John a Groat's House and the Land's end. You had given the whole body of Dissenters reason to be dissatisfied with your treatment; former ministers had opposed their claims from motives of temporary policy, you unwisely denied their *right*, and consequently their writings were pointed more to a defence of their right to ask at *all times*, than a vindication of the policy of granting *now*. And the House of Commons by refusing to one increasing class of Dissenters the liberty of publicly professing their tenets, reduced them to the necessity of defending a tolera-

ration * by arguments drawn from those rights, which no legislature has authority either to restrain or destroy. But independent of these partial preparatives, there was a general inclination in the public to rejoice at the revolution in France.—Englishmen had been taught from their cradles to detest the horrid despotism of its ancient monarchy, † and the persecuting spirit of its national establishment. It had been the constant policy of the House of Hanover, to cherish a contempt for the poverty and misery of its inhabitants, and kindle in the inhabitants of Britain an enthusiastic affection for the government at home, by a comparison with the wretchedness abroad. When bursting their chains, twenty five millions of people had opened to them the glorious prospect of liberty and happiness, the impression on the public mind was manifested, in an almost universal wish that they might realize it. The generous propensity of Englishmen to the love of freedom, was aided strongly by these national prejudices. The higher ranks had not then taken the alarm, and the genuine sentiments of the people were seen untainted by party, and unawed by fear. At this moment, when the minds of large bodies of men had been recently employed in the contemplation of this important truth, that there are certain rights of man, independent of civil government,

* In a scandalous pamphlet bearing the Title of "The example of France a warning to Great Britain," by Arthur Young, Esq. recommended by Mr. Chairman Reeves and his association, as an *excellent* performance; the author concludes with doubting as to the expediency of tolerating sectaries at all, and with declaring his opinion that the inquisition ought not to be abolished in Spain. So much for the *liberal* principles of Mr. Young and the associators! Mr. Young's travels in France was written in a different spirit, he then had no prospect of being honored with any emanation of royal favor. He is now secretary to the new board of agriculture.

† See travels through France, by Arthur Young, Esq.

and when the hearts of Englishmen were warm with the prospect of increasing happiness to the human race by the application of those rights, from which they had derived so many blessings, Mr. Burke came forward to prove that they had no existence.

The event has shewn, that however false reasoning may dazzle, however brilliant metaphors may charm, they make no lasting impressions; it is not enough to delight the imagination, if the understanding remains unconvinced. Never was there a book which has done so much mischief in the world, and so little answered the objects of its author. Such however was its reception from the higher orders, that he plumed himself upon its success, and received the thanks of some public associations, and of the Masters of Arts of the University of Oxford. But short lived was his triumph! His work had awakened the attention of the public at large to a discussion, confined before to the narrow circle of half a dozen political clubs. It was now become the general topic of conversation in all companies: Numberless answers were written and bought up with avidity, and among them, *Paine's rights of Man* made its appearance. If Mr. Burke's labours had not prepared the public for the reception of this work, it probably might have "Strutted its hour upon the Stage," and been heard of no more. The boldness of this republican spirit operated like an electric shock upon the admirers of Mr. Burke. They were terrified at the apparent danger, and lost much of their confidence in a champion, who had so rashly provoked the attack. The first part of Paine's rights of man, was universally condemned among them, but it was not answered with effect, and its author stood high in the public estimation for ability at least. Elated with victory, he published a *second part*, in which his object was more clearly developed and his principles applied, more

closely to the existing state of this country. The sale of this second work was vastly more extensive than of the first, and there is hardly a cottage (to believe the Alarmists) in which it has not been read. But in Scotland it was received with great applause, for there the lower classes have in general, received some degree of education, and are used to read; besides the representation of the people in parliament so ingeniously contrived as totally to exclude them from giving suffrages at elections, is felt as a heavy grievance, and they were offended at the contemptuous manner in which their late petition to the House of Commons for redress had been treated. The reception of Mr. Dundas at Dundee, and other places, manifested pretty strongly the general feelings of that Country.

After the circulation of this book to an extent, that almost exceeds belief, it must be admitted, that if principles hostile to the Constitution, had been making dangerous progress before, that danger would probably be much increased. But you, Sir, and the rest of his Majesty's Ministers, either inattentive to the duties of your offices, or pusillanimous in the discharge of them, took no measures to check it. But after the poison had been insinuated into almost every family in the united Kingdoms, you directed prosecutions to be commenced against the author and publishers. After the public curiosity was nearly satiated, these prosecutions dragged it into notice again; and have not yet suffered it to rest in peace. Little claim has Mr. Burke to thanks from the friends of the Constitution, for having been the occasion of its publication: but less have his majesty's Ministers, for allowing it to be circulated with impunity, and then recording it in the memory of the public.

That there have ever been in this country some persons, who in theory [have given the preference to a republican form of government is probably true, but I have never yet found a man bold enough even to form a wish for a revolution to reduce his theory into practice. Speculative men may enjoy their visionary dreams without danger to our government, so long as the bulk of the people are practically happy under it; and the most effectual and safe answer to Paine's works, would have been not by proclamations and prosecutions, but the redress of grievances;—not by forcibly repressing the rising spirit of the people, but conciliating their affections.

Long before the French Revolution, societies had been formed in England for disseminating political knowledge among the lower classes, with a view to the obtaining a reform in the representation in Parliament. Among their members, names of great rank, such as the Duke of Richmond, Earl Stanhope, &c. had been enrolled. Nor was it conceived that there was any thing illegal in these meetings, since, *before you came into office*, your name had appeared at the head of a society formed for the same purpose, and *recommending the institution of affiliated societies in the Country Towns, to correspond with*. But neither the number, nor respectability of their members, had given these societies any considerable influence in the nation. And as the object of Parliamentary reform, after your apostasy, had become daily more desperate, some had been entirely given up, and the rest were in an expiring way. Even the French Revolution did not revive their credit, and their meetings and advertisements passed unnoticed. But Mr. Burke wrote them into a degree of consequence which they had never before possessed. The Society for constitutional in-

formation in London,* as an instance, had been deserted by most of its respectable Members, and its funds were barely sufficient to pay its secretary and the expences of its meetings, when Mr. Burke's reflections were published. Immediately afterwards, new members offered themselves, fresh subscriptions were poured in, and the society re-established. Nor was this all, new societies infinitely more likely to be dangerous than those on which Mr. Burke exhausted his anger, were instituted in every great manufacturing town in the kingdom, and a regular correspondence among them all established. The most insignificant bodies may rise into dangerous factions if persecuted by those in power, and an attempt to crush a weak or fallen enemy, has often raised up friends in his support. Happy might it have been for Britain, if Mr. Burke had treated the proceedings of these Societies, as his cattle did the chirping of the grass-hoppers, with silence and contempt, instead of alarming the nation at their importance, and expressing the utmost terror at their power and machinations.

All the powers of oratory were employed by Mr. Burke in support of ancient institutions, but in pleading the cause of the Crown, the Clergy, and the privileged Orders, he degraded the lower classes of the people to a level with brutes, supposing them to be devoid of all sense and understanding. This was taken advantage of, and a spirit raised which may, if measures of coercion, should be persisted in, be ultimately productive of much

* Mr. Wyndham in the debate on the King's speech, declared he believed this Society was the author of *the system*, which in France had overthrown all order, and established confusion. The system in itself is not a bad one, if we may judge from the revolutions which have taken place in England, Holland, Switzerland and America. The superstructure raised upon it by the French, may be such as Mr. Wyndham described.

mischief. In the towns where the new political clubs were instituted, the common people ran in crowds to enrol themselves, and the "*swinish multitude*" one of the opprobrious epithets of Mr. Burke, is become like *SANS-CULOTTES* in France, almost a party designation. He has set the higher orders against the lower, the rich against the poor.

In the present reign, the distinction of Whig and Tory has been nearly destroyed, but it would have been infinitely better to have kept them up in all their virulence, than to have introduced this new distinction. Paine artfully took the side of the lower ranks, and much of the currency of his book, may have been owing to their unworthy abuse by Mr. Burke. They read Paine, they entered into political societies, and it may be feared in their rage, against their detractor, they adopted notions which had never obtained access to their minds before.

It required more philosophy than Mr. Burke was master of, to see the popular currency of the works of his antagonist, while his own labours were sinking into oblivion. Those who had taken the alarm from him, "cried out aloud and spared not;" it might have been thought that rebellion was stalking through the land, and the Jacobins at our doors. Reason and argument were thrown aside as weapons too feeble to cope with this Goliath, and the arm of power resorted to. The proclamation against seditious writings, you and your friends have fairly acknowledged, did not check their circulation, and others have not failed to say that it *promoted* their sale, and spread the mischief still more widely. Addresses came from many parts of the country declaring the attachment of the addressers to the Constitution, and their resolution to forward the designs of government, by punishing all offenders. This ingenious libeller again boldly seized the opportunity you afforded

him of circulating fresh poison, and satisfying the curiosity you had excited for his publication. Panic struck at his courage and success, there remained yet one desperate effort. The country had not been so prompt in commencing prosecutions as his Majesty's ministers had wished, and it was deemed necessary for the crown officers to commence them at the public expence, and under the immediate direction of the ministers. To do this, required a firmness of mind which is not, Sir, your characteristic, it was to offer yourself to the mercy of offended authors, and persecuted booksellers. But to preserve you from this danger, an expedient of a rather dangerous nature was used with wonderful adroitness and success. The country was alarmed with rumours of sham plots, and ideal insurrections. Troops were marched and countermarched—and precautions taken to secure the Metropolis from depredations never projected, and the Tower from an attack never meditated. The Militia was called out, and the Parliament assembled out of the usual course. The Parliament assented to the *notoriety* * of all the facts your friends pleased to state; and yet, to this hour, no evidence has been produced either of plot or insurrection, or of danger to the Tower or the Metropolis. In this crisis of artificial terror, you ventured to open your battery of informations and indictments, and at one time the Attorney General boasted that he had no less than *two hundred* lying upon his table. This dreadful alarm, founded upon no

* Mr. Wallace in seconding the address on the King's speech observed that "the insurrections were so *notorious*, that it was needless for him to mention them"—and Mr. Wyndham, said "it was a fact *notoriously* known the whole plan was supported by a purse, which he believed was made up in France." For the sake of those who are not in the secret, it were to be wished that our Legislators would condescend to give the facts of which these assertions, were grounded.

facts, and justified by no real danger, spread through the kingdom. Associations were formed for the preservation of the Constitution and discovery of offenders. Anonymous accusations were encouraged, and spies and informers sent abroad. Servants were set against masters, and sons against fathers; the pleasing confidence of friendship and the domestic enjoyments of life, were poisoned by the introduction of a general system of suspicion and distrust. Expressions of loyalty and attachment to the constitution echoed from every quarter, and sufficiently proved the temper of the nation not to have been contaminated with the false principles of French philosophy, and that your suspicions of its loyalty were wholly unfounded. In the meantime, the treasury prosecutions went on, and the public anxiously expected the discovery of some traitorous machinations, which might justify the conduct of his Majesty's ministers; but notwithstanding the vigilance of the crown officers, and the scandalous artifices of associators, and magistrates to assist them with evidence, we have as yet found out no plots, we have *as yet* had no conviction for high treason. Every county has afforded culprits, but they have been prosecuted for loose, idle expressions, uttered by drunken men in alehouses, or publishing some of Paine's works. *

* I am alluding here to what has passed in England. In Scotland there have begun two prosecutions, one of Mr. Muir, the other of Mr. Palmer; which shew that there exist in this Island, courts not less zealous than the Star Chamber was of old in support of the prerogative. It is impossible, to read these trials, without seeing that the principal offence of these gentlemen consisted in encouraging the common people to apply to Parliament for a reform in the miserable representation of Scotland, a measure highly offensive in all probability to some of the ruling powers: such severe sentences upon such occasions, are the strongest proofs possible of a weak Government. Never were persons punished for state libels with so much severity, as in the end of Charles the second's reign, and in that of James

Some friends of the Constitution not wholly bereft of their senses, and not chusing to make a compliment of their understandings to a Minister, have seen the absurdity of attempting to prevent the circulation of Libels, by the arm of power, when the public mind is prepared for their reception. Your proclamations, your plots, your sham insurrections, and your several prosecutions, have unfortunately kept alive the relish for a discussion, dangerous to government (if dangerous it should become) only through the measures you have taken to suppress it.

The followers of Paine, the enemies to the constitution, even at this time are not numerous or formidable; but you have given them every chance of becoming so. In the struggles for a Republican form of government in France, the Jacobins maintained doctrines subversive of all government; they were more democratic than Paine himself,* and encouraged and justified the commission of murder and assassination in support of their pernicious tenets. One of the least exceptionable of their claims in behalf of the people was an *equality of rights* among the members of society; an equality, which has existed in this country for more than a century (except as to some religious sectaries) and made the principal boast of our happy

II. The legality of the horrid sentences passed upon these gentlemen it is understood will be enquired into when Parliament meets. It is to be hoped too, that the conduct of a certain secretary of state will not escape animadversion, for the unnecessary severity of ordering them to be confined on board the hulks in the Thames, instead of allowing them to be imprisoned in some of the gaols on shore.

* The fate of Paine is somewhat remarkable, his notions of Government which occasioned so much alarm here, are so little calculated for the ruling powers in France, that for some time he has not been heard of, and is supposed to have returned to America.

constitution. It was thought a fortunate stroke by your friends to introduce the words *Jacobin* and *Equality* here, and by making them odious to the people at large, and then fixing them on your opponents, it was hoped that not only the French Revolution, but all opposition to your measures would become odious also. The editors of the government papers, and your hireling pamphleteers, have succeeded in giving the name of *Jacobins*; not only to the friends to a reform of parliament, but even to those, who, not wishing for any alteration, cannot discover the wisdom of your measures, but pant after the restoration of peace as the best security for the constitution. The word *equality* became the constant theme of abuse, and was construed to mean, not equality of rights, but, an *equality of property* also, in which perverted sense the French had never used it. By thus wickedly applying to some of the most respectable characters of Britain, an appellation justly held at first in abhorrence, and falsely stating them to be friendly to an equal division of property, we became familiarized with the name, and under such high authorities some of those who do not take the trouble of thinking for themselves, may possibly not detect the absurdity of the doctrine. You, Sir, have taken no pains to stop this abominable, and, let me add too, highly dangerous slander. The government papers still go on in the same strain, and pamphlets to the same effect are still published. By this means the discontented, however few in number, may flatter themselves that they have able and respectable leaders, and count upon a strength which, *your friends* eagerly seize every opportunity of asserting, belongs to them.

The Duke of Leinster,* and Mr. Conolly, in Ireland ;

*See "The example of France a warning to Great Britain."

the Dukes of Norfolk, and Bedford, with the Earl of Derby, Messrs. Coke, Lambton, Byng, and others in England; have been denominated Jacobins and Anarchists, and described as friendly to an equality of *property*!—When persons enjoying their ample possessions shall become Apostles in such a cause, can it be wondered at, that they find disciples? Such are the current libels of the day! And yet amid the numberless prosecutions directed by the Attorney General; who, has heard of one, for the protection of the character of a public man? The Dissenters do not stand single in complaining that the treasury prosecutions are *all on one side*.*

I shall now dismiss your conduct at home, with observing only, that had the most inveterate enemy to this country, been in your official situation, he could not have taken more effectual measures to destroy its peace and enfeeble its government. Thank heaven! an affection for the constitution is so deeply fixed in the hearts of Englishmen, that even your folly has not yet eradicated it. Before I proceed to examine your measures with respect to France, it will be proper to take a short review of the motives, which have governed the conduct of our allies. By developing them, we shall detect more easily your error in entering into their schemes. After the Princes

* Mr. Burke and all the other writers for passive obedience and non-resistance have hitherto escaped. An insurrection actually took place at Birmingham, and the magistrates were charged, on the oaths of many respectable inhabitants, with a culpable neglect of duty, yet the Crown officers decided that there should be no enquiry into their conduct, and the house of Commons refused to interfere.—The sufferers were Dissenters, and when afterwards an infamous libel, inciting the common people to repeat the outrages at Birmingham, upon the Dissenters in other parts of the kingdom, distributed by several of the Associations for the PRESERVATION OF PEACE, was produced in the House of Commons, it refused to direct the Attorney General to prosecute the author or publishers.

of the blood had quitted their country, and unwisely called upon the nobility to follow their example, they collected together, and armed the emigrants, and publicly announced their intention to return into France at the head of an army to *restore the ancient government*. The Emperor Leopold, connected by the nearest tie of affinity with Lewis XVI. and alarmed for his own Belgic Provinces, saw with anxiety the progress of the revolution in France. The violences offered to the person of the king when stopped in his flight from Paris and imprisoned there, afforded him a pretext for entering into the treaty of Pillnitz with the King of Prussia, and other powers. The object of that treaty (as we find it in the declaration of the Emperor Francis, his Son, dated Vienna, 5th July, 1792) "was to secure the dominions of the parties against France, and to *guarantee the essential basis of the French monarchical government against the infringements of violence and Anarchy.*"* The object of attacking France

* This was also allowed to be the object of this treaty in the declaration delivered by the Emperor to the Count D'Artois, on the 27th August 1791, in which the imprisonment of Louis XVI is mentioned as an object of common interest to *all the sovereigns in Europe*, and the object is declared to be "to place the King of France in a state to settle, in the most perfect liberty, the foundation of monarchical government, equally suitable to the rights of sovereigns and the welfare of the French." (Reflections on the propriety of an immediate conclusion of peace, page 36-7,) and in an official note sent by Prince Kaunitz to the Austrian Ministers at foreign courts, dated Vienna, 1st Nov. 1791, he speaks of imminent dangers, which "threatened the liberty, honor, and safety of the King and royal family; as well as the preservation of monarchical government in France, attacked in its essential principles, by the progress of a popular anarchy, which became dangerous for all the governments of Europe." Ibid page 37-8. After these acknowledgments, it is ridiculous in the author of this work to pretend, that to release from imprisonment the royal family of France was the *sole* object of the treaty of Pillnitz, and unfair to insinuate that no treaty has been signed betwixt the Emperor, and the King of Prussia, but a defensive one, made at Berlin on February 7, 1792.

was afterwards given up on the first hopes of Louis having "recovered the essential degree of liberty, safety, and command, which is requisite for putting the real legality on the constitutional laws of a monarchical state." But a right to take active measures was asserted "when France should fall again into the same disorder, and popular violence, which according to the notions of all states from time immemorial represent a state of anarchy." In this way "the most simple ideas of a monarchical government, entitled them to an union for assisting the *lawful King* of France, and securing from its settled ruin a form of government, whose basis being acknowledged, and confirmed, as inviolable by the new constitution itself, could not be hurt, *without the event of a manifest insurrection taking place.*"—And the King of Prussia in his declaration, dated Berlin, 26th July 1792, says, "To put an end to monarchy in France, to establish for this purpose a legal power, on the *essential basis of a monarchical form*, and by thus giving security to other governments against the incendiary attempts and efforts of a frantic troop; such is the grand object which *the King conjointly with his Ally still proposes!*" In other words these princes declare, that a foreign state, or a concert of states, may interfere wherever a people stung by oppression shall feel it necessary to rise against their tyrant. The question made by the Austrian and Prussian monarchs is not, whether Louis XVI. was a tyrant, but whether, admitting him to be one, there was *manifest danger of an insurrection* against his oppression. Such may be the language of those despots, but *we* remember with gratitude, that William the III. came over here with eleven thousand Dutchmen, not to support the ancient system of government, but to alter it; not to *keep* a tyrant on the throne, but to *support an insurrection* and make him ab-

dicare it. One avowed purpose of the parties to the treaty, or as it has been emphatically called the *conspiracy of kings* at Pillnitz, was to *guarantee a monarchical form of government in an independent state, and over a people, who had determined to change it!* Upon the same principles Switzerland, Holland, Venice, and America, might confederate to guarantee a republican form, wherever it might be instituted. It is evident that the contest is become, if I may so express myself, *personal* to crowned heads, and the present war may justly be denominated the *Crusade of Kings*. It was commenced neither to restore the king of France to his throne, nor to give happiness to the people. For the right of the French people to impose limitations on the crown was admitted by Austria, and the constitution of 1789 recognized by that court; and the King of Prussia (as Gen. Manstein assured Dumourier) would have been contented to see Louis reduced to a tax-gatherer, "if he had but the *name of a King!*" To add to the ridicule of this statement, the allied powers have all along professed, that they did not mean to interfere in the *internal* government of the country, or dispute the right of the people to regulate it. But it often happens that politics and common sense are at variance, and the danger is, that this *conspiracy of Kings* may be followed at no very distant period by a *conspiracy of people*, and the doctrine retorted.

In this respect, all the monarchs who have entered into the confederacy against France, (with the exception of our own) *may have* the same object, for divine right is the foundation of their power, and passive obedience the duty of their subjects. On the contrary, in Great Britain the power of the crown is founded on a solemn compact with the people, and their right to resist tyranny was recognized at the Revolution. Justly then did Dumourier

remark in his letter to M. de Noailles, (the French ambassador at the court of Vienna) so early as the 19th of March 1792, "that if clubs instituted, or books written in any nation in favor of liberty, were a just motive for war, all Europe would long since have undertaken a crusade against Great Britain."

Great Britain could not therefore become an *original* party to the confederacy of Pillnitz,* nor could the United Provinces, or Venice, or Switzerland, because their Republican forms were express declarations that *they* did not feel monarchy to be an *essential basis* of government. But the conduct of France in the course of the last Autumn, furnished Great Britain, and the United Provinces, with sufficient pretexts of another kind for entering into the general league, and it is not impossible that Venice and Switzerland may be *compelled* to follow their example.

Ours however is a kingly government, and some friends of the present constitution fancied they saw a necessity for entering into the war as the only means of saving the crown, the privileged orders, and the church, from the republican and levelling system of France. It may be presumed that you were of that opinion long before you dared to avow it; for even during your negotiations with Mr. Chauvelin, while you constantly disavowed all intention of interfering with the internal government of France, and held out *the appearance* of a strict neutrality, *you were committing direct acts of hostility*. Knowing that a scarcity of corn was apprehended in France, and that its people depended much on foreign supplies, you bought

* Our king claims to be king of France, and therefore could not acknowledge Louis by that title. For that reason in all treaties he has been called *his most Christian Majesty*. We are fighting now to restore, as we say, a race of usurpers.

up all the corn in foreign ports on government account, and ordered such American ships, as should be met with by our cruisers carrying grain to France, to be brought into this kingdom, and then purchased their cargoes and unladed them here; nor was this all, in direct breach of the commercial Treaty, and *the laws of this country*, you usurped a sort of dispensing power; and when by law, the export of grain was permitted to *all* foreign parts, prohibited it from being sent to France alone.

Thus you artfully endeavoured to create a famine in a country, with which Great Britain was at amity; you openly professed neutrality, yet secretly assisted one of the belligerent powers by attempting to starve the other into submission; you denied all intention to meddle with the internal government of a country, yet endeavoured at the risque of a war with America to compel the people to insurrections to destroy it. This conduct amounted in fact to a declaration of war against France, and was a sufficient justification of their declaration against us: They took that step with regret, and endeavoured by negotiation to bring you back to that strict neutrality, which sound policy should have prevented you from infringing, but you refused to negotiate, and in the ferment you had artfully excited, it was not difficult to obtain the sanction of both houses of Parliament.

The objects of the war, as *originally* disclosed to the public, will be found in the following passage in the king's speech, at the commencement of the last Session of parliament. "It is impossible for me to see without the most
 "serious uneasiness the strong and increasing indications,
 "which have appeared there, of an intention to incite
 "disturbances in other countries, to *disregard the rights of*
 "*neutral nations*, and to pursue views of conquest and ag-
 "grandizement, as well as to adopt towards my allies the

“ (states general who have observed the same neutrality with
 “ myself) measures which are neither conformable to the law
 “ of nations nor to the positive stipulations of existing trea-
 “ ties.” And in the debate on the address in answer to
 the King’s message of Feb. the 12th you disclaimed inter-
 fering with the internal government of France, and stated
 the reasons for the war to be, their having attacked our
 allies the Dutch, opened the Scheld, and passed a decree
 in the national Convention of the 19th of November 1792
 declaring their intention to assist the people of all coun-
 tries in destroying their existing governments. The ex-
 planation of this decree by the minister of France, was
 not satisfactory to you. But if these, and *these* alone had
 been our real objects we might before now have been re-
 stored, with honour to ourselves, to the blessings of peace ;
 for the Dutch territories have been evacuated, and they
 in their turn have invaded France ; the French have
 been driven within their ancient frontiers, the scheld is in
 the possession of its former masters, and the obnoxious de-
 cree has been repealed, and the meaning you put upon it
 disavowed. But the war still continues, and is carried on
 with encreasing vigour, we must therefore look for other
 objects.

A design in our rulers to take part in the war, and join the
 crusade of kings ; may be traced long before it was officially
 disclosed to the public. For when Lord Hervey was carry-
 ing on his curious correspondence with the grand Duke of
 Tuscany, to induce him to join the confederacy, his only sub-
 ject of complaint was, “ that France was a nation which ren-
 “ dered itself guilty of regicide in the *sacred* person of his
 “ Uncle Louis the late King of France—a nation, which
 “ is the avowed enemy of his brother the Emperor, of his
 “ Uncle the King of Spain, and of *almost every crowned head*

in Europe." These might be powerful arguments for the conspirators of Pillnitz, but ought to have had no effect on the grand Duke while France observed a strict neutrality towards him, and gave his subjects no cause of complaint. Further it might become the Empress of Russia, who in the American war had formed the league for an armed neutrality to protect the intercourse of neutral nations with *subjects in rebellion*, to call upon Sweden and Denmark to break their neutrality, and join in the plan of starving the French, *because they were rebels*, and therefore the laws respecting neutral nations could not protect vessels destined to supply them! Britain has some political character to lose, yet to our shame the Empress strengthened this strange request with a declaration, that she made it with our concurrence. We had forgotten that one of the causes of the war on our side was, that the French had disregarded the rights of neutral nations. These negotiations shew that Lord Hood, was not in the secret when he published his proclamation at Toulon for establishing Monarchy, *as accepted by their late sovereign in 1789*. 'It is no less singular than true, that the Constitution was not accepted by the king in that year, but the declaration of rights had received this sanction, and it had been decreed that the legislative body should consist of only one chamber, that the property of the church belonged to the nation, and that all distinction of orders should cease.* Lord Hood probably alluded to the constitution, begun indeed in 1789, but not completed till 1791, for in that form the king had accepted it in the most solemn manner, and it had been recognized by the Emperor, and adopted by the Prince of Saxe Cobourg, on the defection of Dumourier. The

* On the 4th Feb, 1790, the King *solemnly engaged* to defend the Constitution, *so far as was then settled*, and on 14, July 1791 he *swore* to the same effect.

Inhabitants of Toulon expressly declared their unanimous wish to adopt a Monarchical form of government, *such as it was originally settled by the Constituent assembly of 1789*, and upon that footing the treaty proceeded.—Thus honored, has been that constitution which Mr. Burke described as the fabric of absurdity raised on the most detestable of crimes, and which appalled with honor the clergy, and the nobility of every country in Europe ! According to Lord Hood, the Duke of Brunswick is conquering Alsace to restore that constitution, which not long ago he attempted to march to Paris to destroy ; the Emigrant Princes and Nobility, are fighting for a form of Government which has annihilated their titles and privileges, and the refractory Priests scattering blessings over armies fighting against the cause of religion.—But this proclamation of Lord Hood it now appears went too far, it was a mistake in him to mention the Constitution of 1789, though in consequence of it he got possession of the city of Toulon. The Prince of Saxe Cobourg also exceeded his instructions when he had a prospect of deriving great advantage from so doing ; he recalled his proclamation when that prospect was destroyed, but you have acted with more adroitness, and have vacated Lord Hood's, after he had gained his point. Is it probable that such dishonest conduct on our part will give confidence to the people of France ? *

* The first article of the declaration of the Commissioners at Toulon made on the 20th Nov. 1793, on the arrival of Sir Gilbert Elliot, seems to be hardly conformable to the original one to the Toulonese. It runs thus,

“ When Monarchy shall be restored in France, and a treaty of peace concluded, stipulating in favor of his Majesty and his allies, *the restitution of all conquests made by France during the war, and a just indemnification for the losses and expences thereby incurred, and a proper security for the future*, his Majesty will cause the town, forts, and harbour of Toulon, together with the ships and stores therein, to be restored, according to the engagement entered into by the said Vice-Admiral.”

From the King's late declaration, the *true* object of our union with Austria and Prussia, appears to be the *restoration of the ancient arbitrary monarchy*, and from the recd of the bishop of Toulon, *the restoration of the ancient persecuting religious establishment of France*. It was left for your extraordinary talents to introduce a new spectacle in the history of Europe, Britain lavishing its blood and treasure to forge chains for the minds,* as well as the bodies of the inhabitants of a large portion of the earth !

The purport of the declaration is, that Britain would not employ the influence of external force with respect to the particular form of government to be established in an independent country ; *except so far as such interference is essential to the security, and repose of other powers*. The King, therefore, demands that some legitimate and stable government should be established, founded on the acknowledged principles of universal justice, and capable of maintaining with other powers the accustomed relations of union

* The following extract from the general orders of the Duke of York, as commander in chief, dated Tournay, December 13, 1793, is highly deserving of notice.

“ His Royal Highness orders, that all the troops under his command pay proper respect to the *host*, and all other religious processions—He directs that all sentinels carry their arms when any religious procession is passing ; and demands the attention of all officers, but particularly of those on duty, to prevent the smallest impropriety being committed on these occasions.

“ His Royal Highness is confident, that the troops under his command will ever bear in mind, that though we differ in some of the ceremonies of religion. we unite with our gallant Allies, and it is our glory to do so, in every sentiment of devotion to our Creator, and attachment and loyalty to our Sovereigns.”

It certainly is highly improper for any persons to *insult* others in their religious exercises, but it is the first time that protestant soldiers have been ordered to pay respect to the *Host*. But *transubstantiation* may become a fashionable doctrine in religion, as well as passive obedience in politics.

and peace. With such a government exercising a legal and permanent authority, animated with a wish for general tranquillity, and possessing power to enforce the observance of its engagements, the king expresses his wish to treat ; and then to please John Bull, and secure the interest of the country gentlemen, a *word* is thrown in about an equitable and moderate *indemnity for the expences of the war*, but if they recollect how they were cajoled into the support of the American war, that argument cannot have much weight. There is not an inhabitant of France who does not cordially join with us in wishing for "a legitimate and stable government," but the question is how it is to be the most speedily obtained. A crowned head may *demand* it, but like Owen Glendower's spirits, will it come when he does call ? The *legitimate* government of any country is that which the people approve, and think fit to establish and the general inclination of France for a republic, has been upon many occasions most unequivocally evinced. But no new government can in an instant become *stable* and permanent, it must have a time for trial, it must have the general approbation of its subjects as well in the *exercise*, as in the *institution*. If all foreign troops were removed from the environs of France for a single month, there might possibly be a legitimate and stable government ; for that power which can raise and pay a million of soldiers in the field, must be possessed of an influence over the minds of its subjects, far beyond that of any Monarch in Europe over his own. To attempt the overthrow of such a government, is to *perpetuate* anarchy in the unfortunate country where it already reigns, it is to render a compliance with the condition impossible, and furnish constant pretexts for interfering in its internal concerns.

But what right has any Country to impose such a con-

dition? Wherever a change of government takes place, there necessarily must be an interval of time in which the people must be left to themselves, without any legitimate government at all. Whether that interval shall be long or short, spent in peace and tranquillity, or in anarchy and confusion, will depend upon the strength of the different parties, and the general habits of the people. England at the revolution, and America, more recently, are instances of nations so fortunate as to have escaped the dreadful misfortunes now afflicting France, but, upon the principles of the late declaration, all the Nations, on the earth might have been justified in declaring war against them *immediately after their respective revolutions had been completed*, because their governments were untried, and consequently weak. In like manner, all Europe might have combined against the Inhabitants of the United Provinces, or Switzerland, at any time during their long struggles for liberty, for they could not take measures for forming stable and permanent governments, till their contest for independence was over. Never, in short, on these principles, could a ground for war be wanting, and yet all interference with internal government might be protested against. One Nation might have a King not 6 feet high, another might have one about that measure; one King might be too wise, another not wise enough; one Monarchy might be too despotic, another too narrowly restricted; on pretexts if possible, still more trifling, the peace of every nation might be disturbed, and its government overturned, and thus a civil war might become a constant prescription for the prevention of anarchy; and the introduction of foreign armies to cut the throats and destroy the property of subjects justified, because they would not be happy in the *manner prescribed* by foreign powers. Poland had committed no crime against the law of nations, but happened unfortunately to have a King

whose only object was to promote the happiness of his subjects; such an example was dangerous to his despotic neighbours, and they deemed, we may presume, an interference "essential to the security and repose of other powers." They falsely charged the Polish nation with encouraging and supporting the licentious principles of french philosophy, and then stripped the patriotic Monarch of a third of his dominions, and appropriated it to themselves. Great Britain is now in alliance with those very powers in "a common cause," and his Majesty is made to say that he expects to find in these crowned robbers, "sentiments and views perfectly conformable to his own"!

But admitting for a moment, that a foreign power has a right to interfere with the internal government of any country, in order to give it stability and strength, yet what right has such foreign power to impose any *specific* form of government? Great Britain which has claimed for itself the right of changing the succession of its own Monarchs, and supported the United Provinces in throwing off the yoke, of royalty altogether, is now engaged in a war to restore Monarchy to a country which has rejected it, and a race of Kings banished by their people! A foreign state, allowing itself to have no right to interfere, except so far as is necessary to secure the peace of foreign countries, demands not only a stable government, but one founded *on the basis of an hereditary Monarchy!* * Let us, Sir, know in what

* The inconsistency of your conduct, and the unsettled state of your mind on French politics is no where more visible, than in the contradictory declarations, &c. of his Majesty, and his Commanders, Commissioners and Embassadors. Thus for instance, Commissioners Lord Hood, Sir Gilbert Elliot, and General O'Hara, declare to the Toulonese so lately as the 20th of Nov. last, that,

"His Majesty sincerely wishes the happiness of France, but *by no means* desires, on this account to prescribe any particular form of government

"The King claims the right of taking a part, only because the anarchy

manner this impudent attack on the principles, which form the basis of our own constitution is to be defended? Let us know who has dared to advise our monarch to take so dangerous a step and put his throne to the hazard? Your whole conduct of late has been founded on the dread of republican notions making a spread among us, and to secure the constitution, you have violated it. To enforce the collection of oppressive taxes, the Excise has been your recipe; to suppress rising discontents, a military force separated from the people and confined in Barracks, your resource. And now to the disciples of Paine, who argue against a monarchy at home, because its trappings are too expensive, you madly oppose the stimulus of fresh taxes, and fresh oppression, to impose that expence on another country.

"which now desolates that country threatens the tranquillity of his own subjects and that of the other powers of Europe, whose safety and peace, materially depend on the re-establishment of order in France, and of a regular system, which may hold out to them a secure ground of negotiation and friendship: And his Majesty does not hesitate to declare, that the re-establishment of monarchy, in the person of Louis XVII, and the lawful heirs of the crown, appears to him the best mode of accomplishing these just and salutary views. This form of government has not only prevailed in France from the earliest times, but, being capable of such limitations as may suit the respective circumstances of different nations, has been proved by experience to be the best adapted, in great countries, to unite the advantages of security and order with real liberty.

"Such a system, subject to such modifications as may hereafter be made therein in a regular and legal manner, when tranquillity shall have been restored in France, would afford to his Majesty the best and most pleasing prospect of terminating the evils and miseries now endured by the French nation, and of the renewal of a regular and amicable intercourse between that country and other states.

"It is to these great ends that his Majesty's measures will be directed; and his protection and assistance will be extended, as far as circumstance will admit, to all those who manifest their desire to concur in so salutary a work."

Moreover the King's declaration is made to sanction that obnoxious decree of the republicans of France, which was originally assigned, as *one* of the causes of the war. The declaration is addressed not to the government or people of France, but *the well disposed part of the people*; and they are invited * to shake off the yoke of a sanguinary anarchy which the declaration however admits "founds its power on the pretended consent of the people."

It is too much to expect that a great genius like yours should be confined to write according to the common rules of grammar, but it may be some excuse, if this declaration was sent over to our court written originally in French, or German, and afterwards translated into English. Probably however this "sanguinary anarchy," by some sort of oratorical figure means the present Government of France, conducted by Danton, Barrere, &c. which "itself carries fire and sword through extensive provinces, for having demanded *their law, their religion and their lawful sovereign.*" This is a pretty strong confession that the object of the present war, not only goes to the restoration of the *ancient monarchy*, but also of the *ancient laws and religion too*; and so it appears afterwards, when the well disposed part of the people are called upon to join "the standard of an hereditary monarchy in order to unite themselves under the empire of *law, morality and religion,*" So that the declaration is in fact addressed to the friends of the ancient despotism and the ancient

* "It is necessary just to remark an artifice always employed by the French, who when they revile our Government, never fail to speak in the most respectful manner of the nation. I will not insult Mr. Wilson by supposing him the dupe of this absurd and insidious distinction, but shall treat (as our Constitution requires) *hostility to the government, as enmity to the Nation.*" Reflections page 26.

establishment, and we who banished the race of Stuart, are fighting to restore the race of Capet, we who reformed the national religion and rejected popery, are fighting to continue its abuses !

The son of Louis the XVI. is to be restored, and to be an hereditary Monarch, so far at length we have got. These are the conditions which one independent nation has a right to impose upon another, according to some new fangled notions of the British Cabinet, and when (but not till then) "this moment of disorder, calamity, and public danger" is past, this hereditary monarchy may be *susceptible of modifications*, but must not be destroyed. A monarchy established for a moment, shall be, according to this new system, imposed as a yoke upon the neck of the subjects for ever. Fortunately for Venice, Switzerland, the United Provinces, and America, their revolutions were completed *before* it prevailed. No oppression, no tyranny, can amount to a cause of forfeiture or abdication *in future*, and Kings by a prudent union among themselves may commit all sorts of enormities with impunity. Not even any modifications of monarchy can take place, without the consent of foreign powers, and after Louis the XVII shall be restored, and "the moment of disorder, calamity, and public danger is over," an Assembly consisting of such persons as foreign Monarchs shall please to nominate, may legislate for this independent Country. After what has happened in Poland, we must not be surprised to see this mockery of representation surrounded by foreign troops, the subjects for their deliberations dictated by foreign courts, members menaced, and bribes offered to tempt them from their duty by foreign Generals in the public assembly, and those who have the patriotism and resolution to run all risques to preserve their country, forcibly exiled. The modifications of hereditary monarchy,

alluded to in the declaration, thus dictated at the point of the bayonet, and sanctioned under the coercion of foreign force, will be no doubt a *firm, stable, legitimate, and permanent* government, *well calculated for the security and repose of foreign powers!* But it seems that Britain and her allies claim *some just and equitable indemnification* for their expences, in thus kindly interfering for restoring peace and good government to France. It may be curious to speculate in what manner this indemnity is to be given. As to money, the French after having exhausted their finances in a long and bloody war, may have none to give, and will our allies flushed with the recent division of Poland, hesitate to seize some of the Provinces of France in payment. Here, Sir, let me remind you, that you told us not long ago, that the balance of Europe trembled on its beam, because Russia retained possession of a small portion of barren territory between the Bog and the Dniester; and then let me call upon you for a justification of your conduct in permitting a large and populous district to be divided by force between that power and Prussia, and a great kingdom to be so weakened, as to become in fact a province to Russia, a power you affected to consider as already too great. And possessing such apprehensions for the balance of power in Europe, why have you plunged us into a war for the divine right of Kings, and the dismemberment of another kingdom for the further aggrandizement of the same Monarchy. Nor does your inconsistency end here, for we are now combating against the *only power* on the Continent, which can withstand the future efforts of Russia and Austria at almost universal empire.

After the conquest of France, should these two powers combine, Prussia *united with all the other powers* of Europe could make but a feeble resistance. The King of Prus-

fla is aware of his danger, and wishes to retire. He cannot, nor ought Britain to wish to see France debilitated too much. If the balance of power in Europe is a material object in the eyes of politicians, the sooner the present war is ended the better. It must be owned, that some parts of your conduct are irreconcilable with any rational objects that can be suggested for the war, but possibly with Messrs. Wyndham and Burke, you are absurd enough, to aim, at the *extermination* of the whole French nation. For before the campaign commenced, you improvidently hired a band of Hessian mercenaries for *three* years; and have agreed to subsidize the King of Sardinia, for keeping up *his own* army and protecting *his own* dominions, and bound this country not to make peace, till *all the territories taken from him* by the French shall be given up. So that if Monarchy had been restored in one campaign (as your friends were sanguine enough to expect) the hire of the troops must have been paid to Hesse till the stipulated time was run out, and you have bound us to wage eternal war, if the republicans should not be subdued. Nor ought the people of England to feel much confidence in their allies, or trust too much to their declarations; for will *they* be content to stop in a career of success at the same moment with us? Will *they* hold the towns they have gained, for the King they are to place on the throne? or schedule the effects *they* have taken, to return them to the state? No such thing, the flagitious subjugation of Poland, leaves the French no security in their assurances, gives them no hope short of a dismemberment of their country; and the imprisonment of La Fayette for having supported the constitution of 1789, the revocation of the proclamation of the Prince of Saxe Cobourg and the superseding that of Lord Hood, may do more than raise suspicions, that the conspiracy of Kings will not be satis-

hed with the restoration of a *limited* monarchy. You have told us what may be the consequences if the war should be unsuccessful, but if successful, the prospect is not more chearful. Leagued with allies you cannot trust, and with whom this country is united in no common principle, it is hardly possible that the issue should be favorable to the peace of Europe. There will probably be disputes about the division of the spoil, there will be jarring interests to arrange,* and claims of indemnification to settle. The people of France, however subdued, will not readily submit to the terms of their conquerors, nor will *they* agree among themselves. In short a *future war* among the other powers of Europe, in which Great Britain must take a part, is almost the necessary consequence of the present one. The Empress of Russia prudently remains in a state of inactivity, and spares her men and treasure, to take advantage of the exhausted condition of her allies.

In another point of view, it becomes a serious question whether the league against the people of France, is sufficiently strong to *force* them to give up their republican form of government. Here the recent example of America ought to have been a warning voice. That was also a war against principles, and ended, as, it requires not the gift of prophecy to foretel, this must do. A rich and warlike nation was opposed to a scattered and disunited people; poor, without resources, and unused to arms. At the commencement of hostilities, a few regiments were deemed sufficient to subdue them in a few months. Yet the war united them, taught them the necessity of military discipline, and after a contest of seven years, they were

* The King of Prussia's demand on the Germanic Body, of a debt of 50 years standing, shews that he is tired of the war.

acknowledged as a free and independent State. What was the consequence to Britain? The loss of thirteen rich and flourishing provinces, an increase of nearly 120,000,000. cool. of national debt, the imposition of burthen some taxes, and discontent among the lower orders of people.—The disparity of France as opposed to the Allies, is certainly not greater than was the disparity of America as opposed to Great Britain; only its inhabitants are not collectively poor, and without resources, nor individually unused to arms.* They have opposed superior armies consisting of the best disciplined troops in Europe, for two campaigns on their frontiers, and hardly an impression has been made upon their territories. The only doubt that can arise of their success is, whether the people are sufficiently united to act together in concert, for it is manifest that their armies possess all that enthusiasm which characterises *new* States, and the example of America, Holland, and Switzerland, prove that where enthusiasm animates an united people there will be no want of resources, for there will be no hardships complained of. The present situation of France is much misunderstood in this country, and you, Sir, seem to have been mistaken concerning it. There was a period of time, since the Revolution in 1789, when the friends to monarchy were superior, both in influence and numbers, but the Duke of Brunswick's manifesto, and

* "In a country in which every man is a Soldier, armies are easily assembled; the national Guards of Picardy and Artois, together with the garrisons of a few of the frontier towns would form a formidable body; and the fortresses which surround the frontiers of France would furnish an immediate supply of artillery and military stores. On the other hand the troops which are to repel the invasion, must be brought by toil some marches from the banks of the Danube, and the artillery transported with incredible labour and expence from the Magazines of Brandenburg and Hungary."—Reflections, &c. page 102.

the imprisonment of La Fayette, gave the ascendancy to the republicans, and occasioned the death of Louis XVI. The principles of republicanism had before that time made very considerable progress, and the allowing the king to remain upon the throne, was rather a compromise among different parties, than the choice of the majority of the people. The apathy with which the flight of the King was received by the general body of the people, and the alacrity with which the national guard turned out at a moments warning in every part of the kingdom to arrest him, was a convincing proof that royalty had, even then lost its charms. The flight of La Fayette afforded further evidence of the same truth. Subsequent events, particularly the death of the King, increased the number of converts to republicanism, and the temper of the people may be seen in the principles of the representatives returned by the primary assemblies to the present, and preceding national Convention, as well as in the disappointment of Dumourier. The acceptance even of a new Constitution during the late campaign, by a great majority of the departments, ought to render you suspicious of the interested accounts of the emigrant nobility. It has been evident for some time past, that the numbers and influence of the friends to kingly government are so much reduced, as to be incapable of rendering the Allies any material assistance. Of this the destruction of Lyons, and the dispersion of the insurgents in la Vendee, even while the largest armies ever collected in civilized Europe are invading their frontiers, are convincing proofs. The capture of Toulon has not furnished us the means of penetrating into the country, and the possession of the French fleet as a pledge for their future king, will probably be the only advantage we shall derive after a *disgraceful retreat*, the expenditure of an immense sum of money, and the loss of

a great number of men.—The attempt to land in Brittany has not been even so successful, and notwithstanding an army of Royalists, consisting, as the credulous people of this country believed a month ago, of no less than 100,000 men were in their rear, and a British fleet, with 10,000 men and all sorts of ammunition and stores, in their front, yet the inhabitants on the Coast have wanted the *courage*, if they had the *inclination* to declare themselves. The severe punishment inflicted upon the city of Lyons, and the rigid treatment which all enemies to the present government have indiscriminately met with, have for the present suppressed all appearance of commotion, except among the despairing fugitives from la Vendee. The attempts of the Royalists in the North, West, and South, have been equally unsuccessful, and, *if some change in the general sentiments of the people does not take place*, the invasion of the Eastern Frontiers must end in the same manner. The grand struggle for power has been, not, between the friends to royalty and republicanism, but between the two republican parties, distinguished by the names of *the Mountain*, and *the Girondists*. The Mountain has proved victorious, and the execution of the leaders of the opposite party, and a sense of mutual danger from foreign enemies has put an end to the division for the present. A vast majority of the people appears now to be united in the republican cause, and animated with the most ferocious dislike of monarchy. The peasants in general in all the departments, have obeyed the requisition of the Convention, and hurried with alacrity to the frontiers, to repel the combined armies. To this wonderful enthusiasm of the lower orders, as distinctly marked in their impetuous onset in battle, as in their patient endurance of hardship in the camp, must be attributed the disappointments of the allies at Dunkirk, and Maubeuge. The

whole of the force obtained by the late requisition, has not yet been organized and brought into action, but the Prussian troops, have already felt its effects severely in Alsace, and the northern armies begin to suffer from it. The effort on the part of France is indeed an astonishing one, and if the decrees of the Convention can be in any considerable degree carried into execution, it is most probable that the combined armies will be obliged to retire.

But it may be said that I am mistaken in supposing that a vast majority of the French are now republicans, for that Marseilles, Bourdeaux, Lyons, Toulon, and St. Maloes, have all shewn a disposition to restore the ancient government. I deny the fact, but if it is admitted to be true, it may be material to consider what influence these towns may have over the inhabitants of all France.

It must be remembered that the great mass of the people are employed in agriculture; and commerce has not as in England, mingled itself with the avocations of all the inland provinces and become necessary to their prosperity.

The trading towns, however rich and populous, are comparatively of small account when set against the whole country.* Suppose they contain, and employ 3,000,000 of people, it is not an *eighth* part of the population of France, but if the great towns of England contain and employ the same number, it is more than a *third* part of the highest calculation of its inhabitants. Among the landholders and peasants, as in America, you must look

* Mr. Young tells me that the population of France is much greater than that of England, in proportion to its Territory, and he calculates that in the towns of France there are not more than *one fourth* of the whole number of people, while in England he calculates the towns to contain *one half*.

for the true disposition of the people, and not in the trading towns ; Boston, New-York, Philadelphia and Charlestown, were no more the indexes of the general will of the people of America, than Marseilles, Toulon, Lyons, Bourdeaux, Nantz, or St. Maloes, of that of France. An enthusiasm rising almost to phrenzy, possesses the farmers and peasantry, animating every bosom, and invigorating every arm in favor of a Republic.

This arises naturally from their never having tasted the sweets of rational liberty, and knowing nothing of Monarchy, but from its oppressions. And their interest is also deeply concerned, for should Monarchy be restored, and the Nobles reclaim their ancient possessions, they must be brought to a severe account. For four years past, the present tenants have held their lands without payment of rent, and grown rich on the spoils of their former masters. Under the arbitrary government of France there was no yeomanry, no middle class of people, all were either Princes or beggars, Lords or Vassals. It could not be expected, that slaves after having emancipated themselves by force, and seized their masters property, would be easily induced to return to their former dependence. It is not in human nature, nor will the feudal vassals of France willingly relinquish their farms, and pay up the arrears of their rents. Moreover many of the peasants have become purchasers of small portions of land belonging to the emigrant nobles, and the national convention have wisely encouraged the division of large estates. In consequence a new order is risen up, and a numerous yeomanry substituted instead of the feudal lords, and will these new possessors of land declare themselves in favor of a change of government, when their ruin must be the inevitable consequence ? Besides all this, the immense circulation of as-

assignats * operates as a bond of union, through every part of the country ; every holder of them, in other words, every man who supposes himself to have a farthing in his pocket, is interested in the continuance of the present system, and that the symbols of his wealth should not be annihilated. The reformation in England was purchased by grants of the church lands, and one device for giving stability to the new government at the Revolution, was to borrow money on its security.

The principle topic used by your friends to prove that the war must necessarily be of short duration, is, that the resources of the French are exhausted, and they have neither money nor credit to carry it on. This would be very true if they were not in a state of Revolution. They might then be limited as Britain is, by the produce of the taxes its governors might venture to impose upon the people, and the sums they could borrow on the credit of those taxes. But at present, they are bounded by no regard to *annual* income, they are making use of the *Capital* itself, and all the nations of Europe united cannot contend with them in expence. The property of the Crown, of the Nobility, and of the Clergy, have afforded them immense sums ; and the forced loan, the confiscations, plunder of

* The gold and silver currency of France just before the revolution, is stated by Mr. Young to have been no less than 2,000,000,000 of livre (or about £87,500,000 sterling) and he calculates 18-20 of it to be now out of circulation. The whole amount of assignats in circulation he makes to be 6,000,000,000, of livres. To answer this, the regal and ecclesiastical plunder has been reckoned at 4,000,000,000 of livres, and the estates of 70,000 emigrants at 4,800,000,000 more, making in all 8,800,000,000, of livres : the other resources alluded to in the Text, cannot be estimated at less than half as much more ; or making in the whole, according to Mr. Young's valuation of the livre, £524,000,000, sterling. An accumulation of wealth beyond the power of all the other nations of Europe to raise.

Churches, discoveries of hidden Coin, &c. have brought their Assignats to par, and filled their treasury with specie. And after all they have now amassed shall be expended there will not be wanting expedients to fill the public coffers. The *landed* interest it is evident now greatly preponderates over the *commercial* one, and the disposition of some of the great trading towns to a Counter Revolution, has afforded pretexts for taking away the lives, and confiscating the property of the richest Merchants and Tradesmen. If the war continues, the proscriptions of the rich will probably become more numerous, they will increase with the necessities of the state, until the immense wealth and capital of France shall be drained into the national treasury. Mr. Young may calculate in how many campaigns these resources will be exhausted, and how many the combined powers can support, without endangering their respective governments at home.

In contemplating the wonderful revolution in France, the mind is naturally led to reflect on similar events in other Countries, and history teaches, that after an ancient government has been destroyed, a period of anarchy, confusion, and crime, almost always must succeed, before the people can resume the habits of obedience to the laws, and the government can be confirmed. The united States of America may perhaps be mentioned as an exception. I will not enter into an enquiry why they were so fortunate, but from a great variety of circumstances their situation differed from any other people. The Independence of Switzerland was not acknowledged by the House of Austria, till after three hundred and fifty years of unsuccessful war, nor that of the United Provinces, by Spain, till after a struggle of 80 years. The revolution in our own country was not the work of a day, it was begun in 1640, and not completed 'till 1688. There were *twenty* years of civi

war, and unsettled government, and afterwards *twenty eight* years more of party violence, pushed to an extreme little short of civil war, before we could say we had a constitution. In the contest, one of our Kings lost his head upon the scaffold, and another was obliged to abdicate his throne. Different forms of government were tried, and during these experiments, the country suffered all the horid consequences of a state of anarchy. But will any Englishman, feeling as he ought to feel upon the subject, say that the revolution, and the subsequent happiness of British subjects has cost too dear? France has had greater disadvantages to combat, the arbitrary spirit of its ancient government, aided by the policy of the Catholic religion, had degraded the lower classes of people to a degree of ignorance and barbarity, of which Englishmen and Protestants can hardly form a conception. They were not prepared for liberty. It had long been the fashion for the men of letters, and the few of the higher ranks, who dared to think for themselves, to be the disciples of Rousseau or Voltaire,—to avow a disregard to the government, and a total disbelief in the established religion of their country. To secure the support of the lower classes in the present revolution, every species of deception and corruption has been practised, and in consequence, the most dreadful excesses have been committed. The French nation may at this moment be compared to a man in the paroxysm of delirium in a fever, his situation renders him an object of compassion, but we have no reason to despair of his final recovery. After the paroxysm is over, it may be hoped that, as England did, when she had recovered from a similar attack, France may long possess a form of government, productive of infinitely greater happiness than it has ever hitherto enjoyed. But it is said, there is no settled government in France, with which we can negotiate the terms

of peace, the inference then is, that we must go on fighting, 'till some form of government is settled. Surely those who adopt this futile argument, becoming only the pettish logic of a child, forget all that history teaches, and wilfully reject the wholesome admonitions of even recent events. I am fully persuaded that if the Duke of Brunswick had not invaded France, Louis the XVI would now have been seated on his throne; and if the war for restoration of monarchy had been given up afterwards, his Queen and her family might have been restored to her relations. Pressed by foreign powers, the republicans have been driven to excesses and crimes, which humanity shudders at, and the more their fears are worked upon, the greater will be their cruelty and oppression, in this contest, the chance of establishing any form of government upon a fixed and stable foundation is rendered every day more remote, and becomes more and more so, as the successes of the Allies are multiplied. The dreadful confusion which now reigns in France, has been increased by the approach of foreign troops, and may be lengthened by their persisting in the attack. Some years must pass at any rate, before such a majority of the people will have confidence in *any* form of government as to give it that stability and power, which, we are told, is previously necessary to any negotiation for peace. In the great rebellion in England nearly 20 years elapsed, before there was any fixed and steady form of government, if even then it could be called one, and more elapsed in Switzerland and Holland, after they had thrown off the chains of despotism. Yet the States of Europe did not consider these Countries as *chafms* among the people of the earth during their respective contests, but entered into treaties with them, and acknowledged them as independent powers. Such ought to have been, the policy of our rulers, then, instead of rushing headlong into a war, without an object, and to which the human eye can mark

out no limits either in time or expence ; instead of dying the fields of France with the blood of Englishmen, and starving our manufacturers at home ; instead of fresh taxes, and fresh causes of discontent ; we might have seen this country raised to a height of prosperity and happiness unexampled in all former ages.—We might have seen our manufacturers in full employment, our merchants the carriers of the world, the subjects of Britain universally prosperous and happy. From a people conscious of the advantages they daily experienced under the best of constitutions, there would have been no reasonable ground to apprehend any danger. The affection of its subjects would have been its best security.

Having shewn that the war is not likely to be speedily concluded, I proceed now to examine into our resources for carrying it on. Of our finances some months ago, I was disposed to entertain a favourable opinion, but I do not think that the precise state of them has been accurately understood by the public, perhaps even not by yourself. In the year 1785, you proposed your plan for appropriating a million a year towards the discharge of the national debt ; so that to discover the true state of our finances, we have to examine the accounts of the seven years since elapsed. Mr. Morgan in his review of Dr. Price's writings on the subject of the finances of this Kingdom, published in 1792, has stated (from the report of the select committee of 1791) that in 1786, the deficiency of the ordinary revenue, after supplying the annual million towards the reduction of the national debt, was

		£ 2,321,661
In 1787	—————	1,112,169
1788	—————	1,216,130
1789	—————	1,122,136
1790	—————	558,597
In five years amounting to		£ 6,330,693

being more than a million and a quarter per Annum. So that, in an Irish way we have *paid off* a million a year, while our income has been £1,250,000 less than our expenditure. But if we advert to the sums actually borrowed during these five years, this may be placed in a still more alarming point of view.

In 1786 a million was borrowed in exchequer bills voted the preceding year, and the anticipation of the Lady Day quarter produced from the sinking fund and the arrears of the temporary annuities, £903,210.

In 1789 another million was borrowed on a Tontine, and £187,000 on a short annuity.

In 1790, on Dec. the 31st. the Navy debts had increased £537,950 making in the whole £3,360,300 so that setting off this sum borrowed, against the 5,000,000 advanced, the wholesome actually provided out of the Treasury in the five years, was only £1,369,700 supposing all deficiencies to be provided for; and even that sum did not arise from the ordinary revenue, but from casual and extraordinary receipts; such as *respite duties* paid by the India Company, *Lotteries*, &c. my faithful guide, Mr. Morgan, not giving any state of the finances after 1790 I am enabled to state in general only, that in 1790, the ordinary revenue did not produce a million surplus. That in 1792 you stated that there was a considerable surplus, £400,000 of taxes were taken off, and £200,000 added to the annual million. In 1793 £200,000 was also added to the annual million, but £4,500,000, was raised by way of loan to make up the deficiency of the revenue. So that in one year and one year only, viz 1792, since the scheme for liquidating the national debt was adopted, has the ordinary revenue of the country exceeded the expenditure, and produced the requisite million. The whole amount of their purchases for the public, is about £12,000,000, three per cent

stocks, but there have been no less than *three* armaments, estimated to have cost £4,000,000, and £4,500,000 borrowed in the last spring, which added together makes *in cash* £8,500,000, or more than the whole sum paid off in the space of seven years. Closing the account at this moment, and the settlement must be daily more disadvantageous to Great Britain, more money has been borrowed for, and more money expended in, *extraordinary* services since the scheme for liquidating the national debt was adopted, than has been paid off. You flattered us in 1792, with a prospect of paying off so much as to give an annual saving of 4,000,000, a year by 1808. But what avails the purchases of the Commissioners, if your miserable politics oblige us regularly to add in a greater proportion to the national debt? The annual million thus artificially procured, and made up of loans and contingencies, has enabled the Commissioners to buy up stock daily, and nearly the same effect has been produced in the stock Exchange, as if Great Britain had been *laying by* that sum annually out of its ordinary revenue. Jobbers have beheld with astonishment, stock bought up regularly on account of the public, and the market kept always bare. The stocks rose before the war in a most rapid and unexpected manner, and to assist the delusion, you protracted the funding of the debts of government, and suffered all its securities to remain undischarged. The consequence has been, that we have entered into a war with an unfunded debt of not less than 11,000,000l, and navy bills have generally been at not less and frequently at more, than *nine per cent* discount. These regular purchases made by the Commissioners, cannot now be discontinued without danger to public credit. They make part of the general policy of our government. You felt this necessity when

you negotiated the last loan, and actually permitted the three per cents to be purchased by the Commissioners at 77, when you sold them for government at 72, and by this the public sustained a loss of no less than 75,000*l*. This is a strong fact to establish a presumption that no Minister will hereafter be bold enough to divert the capital of the Commissioners from the market in time of war, when a loan is necessary.

In prosecuting our enquiry into the resources of Great Britain for carrying on a war, it is necessary to advert to the state of our commerce, and the prospect of its future produce to the revenue. For in the course of eleven years of peace, as has been observed before, the ordinary revenue of this country has in only *one year* exceeded the ordinary expenditure, and produced the annual million. The cause of that singular instance of public prosperity will be found in the flourishing state of our commerce, and it is not from any partiality to my own pursuits, that I venture to assert that, on that commerce, depends the future prosperity, nay even safety of Great Britain. Check it and her subjects murmur, destroy it, and they are ruined. Never perhaps since the world began, was the commerce of any country pushed to such an extent as that of Britain in the Summer and Autumn of 1792. Never were the ingenuity and energy of Manufacturers, or the industry and enterprize of Merchants, crowned with greater success. The whole world was made tributary, and riches poured in from all quarters. It was in the full tide of this general prosperity, that rumours of war assailed their peaceful habitations. A sudden check was given* to that paper circulation on which

* "But it was likewise evident that any public danger or alarm, which could in any degree affect the credit of the nation, operating upon such a state of things, would destroy the whole system of mutual confidence

the whole system depended, and in the course of a few weeks a dreadful change took place, spreading distress, and ruin through the land, and filling it with impoverished Tradesmen, and bankrupt Merchants.

The foundation of this short season of national prosperity is worthy of the most serious consideration that you, Sir, or any other statesman can give it. And I am sorry to observe that it seems not to have been hitherto well understood, even by the directors of the Bank of England, for to their imprudent conduct, I fear, much of the late distress may be attributed.

It is admitted by all, that if we had no circulating medium but the coined specie of this country, that its commerce must be confined within very narrow limits indeed, it would hardly suffice for the exigencies of the city of London alone.* A substitute has been found in bills of exchange and promissory notes, and they have been generally preferred to cash, because they are attended with no trouble, and comparatively little risque, and may be adapted to every transaction. But as the paper on which these instruments are written is intrinsically of no value, they can be passed from hand to hand as cash, only so long as mercantile people have confidence in the solvency of the person who must ultimately pay them. Before the Bank of England was incorporated, and for some years afterwards, the Bankers of London were accustomed to issue notes, payable to bearer on demand. The Bankers saw this new institution with uneasiness, and a considerable degree of jealousy was entertained of its success,

“among individuals, by *one rapid and tremendous shock.*” *Reflections &c.* page 82.

* It has never been estimated at more than £40,000,000 sterling.

By degrees the Bank rose into a decided superiority, and the Bankers, not chusing to leave themselves in the power of a rival company who might destroy them at any moment, preferred safety to profit, and discontinued the issuing of notes. The Bank of England for a good number of years afterwards had it entirely to themselves, but issued none for less than ten pounds. As our manufactures increased in an astonishing degree after the peace of 1763, it was found convenient in the country, to bring into circulation notes for smaller sums. This practice has been since restricted by the legislature, but by this means the common people in the country, most of whom had never seen a bank note in their lives, had felt so much convenience from the substitution of a paper currency for the coined one, that banking houses have been set up in almost every town in the kingdom, and their notes readily circulated. Notes make a small part of the circulation, but are the principal source of profit to most country banks, excepting those in Lancashire, which issue none, the reason of which I shall explain presently. It is obvious that the amount of all these notes in circulation is an addition of just so much to the coined specie of the country, and that without some such contrivance, not only our trade must be lessened; but the common transactions of life would become troublesome. This circulation too is productive of advantage to the public, while the circulation of specie is attended with loss, for every note pays duty for a stamp, every guinea costs something for coinage. The success of country banks however may have operated in some degree to the injury of the bank of England, and its notes may not have circulated of late to the extent they have formerly done.* It has been suggested that the

* We are told in "the Reflections" that this circulation has been said to have been checked to the amount of 7,000,000l. But surely this cannot

bank directors observed this defalcation with a jealous eye, and were not displeased at an opportunity of checking the prosperity of the country banks, but the conduct of that respectable body for many years past is the best refutation of such calumny. They have lost the little jealousy their predecessors felt; for raised in the estimation of the world far above all rivalry, they can fear no combination of individuals, or private companies, and have rightly considered themselves as the general guardians of public credit, and on many occasions generously sacrificed their own interests to support it. Not then to a malignant wish to destroy country bankers, or their correspondents in London, but to mistaken apprehensions for their own safety, should be attributed those measures, which they took in the months of December, January, February, and March last, and unfortunately proved the immediate cause of our late misfortunes.

The business carried on at country banks is easily understood. Money is lodged with them, for which they allow a moderate interest as 3 or 3½ per cent, and besides this, they keep accounts with mercantile people who pay them a commission for their trouble. The profits of a

be true; the whole capital of the Bank is only 11,686,000*l.* and 3,200,000*l.* of that is lent to government at three per cent, and cannot be called in; therefore to suppose that the Bank of England would venture on a capital of 8,486,000*l.* to issue notes to such an extent as to sustain a *diminution* of no less than 7,000,000*l.* is to suppose that the directors are running greater risks than ever were run by the most enterprising country banker. And in the year 1781, when supposed to be thus indiscreetly trading beyond their capital, they lent government 2,000,000 more at 3 per cent, which was not repaid till 1787. It has been stated as a conjecture in a book of some repute,* that the amount of their notes in constant circulation, was not less than 50,000,000*l.* or almost six times the value of their real capital, but I could never believe it— It is more than the whole current specie of Great Britain.

* The History of Lord North's Administration printed in 1784. page 32 note.

country banker therefore must arise from the lending out of money lodged in his hands at a higher interest than he pays, and the commission upon his mercantile accounts. In addition to this business, which is common to all the banks, most of them issue promissory notes, and, where little trade is going on, this makes a principal part of their profits, for upon this whole circulation they receive an interest of five per cent. In Lancashire, (and I believe in some other places) where the mercantile accounts are immense, and from local circumstances, cash occasionally scarce, the bankers do not venture to issue notes. The Bank of England has no means of knowing with precision the quantity of promissory notes of country bankers in circulation, though you, Sir, may derive considerable information from the produce of the stamp duty. But being the great mart for discounting all bills of exchange, the directors can form a pretty accurate judgment as to the range of business, and solidity of the houses, which draw them. Every banker in the country has a correspondent in London, upon whom he draws for such sums of money as are wanted by his customers; these bills are usually drawn payable in six weeks or two months after date, and it is in them that all commercial payments are made; for all the specie, and all the bank notes of every description circulating in the country, would go but a little way towards supplying the exigencies of our present extended system of commerce. Large sums could not be paid in cash, for it does not exist, nor in notes of the Bank of England, or any other bankers, for they cannot be collected with facility; but bills of exchange may be made in an instant either large or small, at a longer or shorter date as the bargain requires. Besides, these bills are attended with a further convenience, for if they have only a short time to run, they may be frequently passed as cash, if a long one they may be discounted;

and turned into present capital. To secure to them this sort of currency, the country bankers have found it their interest, to secure for their correspondents in London some of the most respectable bankers and merchants, in whose hands they agree to keep constantly a large deposit of money, or to whom they agree to pay a commission for their trouble and risque.

The country Bankers being generally persons of considerable property and possessed of the confidence of their neighbours, and their London correspondents selected from those whose names may give credit and currency to their paper, their bills have always been held in high estimation among the monied men; and when money is plentiful, these bills come into the market with a decided preference, and are so eagerly sought after by private discounters, that few of them are carried to the Bank. On the contrary, in times of distress and danger when the monied men find more profitable ways of improving their fortunes, and bills of all denominations are discounted with difficulty, the Bank of England has generally supported the public credit, and alleviated the distress of individuals, by extending its discounts in proportion to the emergency. Before the recent apprehension of war had checked the prosperity of our commerce, the monied men had been at a loss to find out means of employing their cash to advantage, and immense sums were locked up by the discounting of long bills drawn by African, and West Indian Merchants, at very distant dates. In this situation very few, I may say hardly any of the bills of the Country Banks were brought to the Bank of England to discount. But in consequence of the false alarm artfully excited in the Month of December,* all private discounts

* "It must also be remembered that the depression of the public funds, the scarcity of cash, and the discredit of paper circulation, began long before the war, and even before the armament." *Reflections &c.*, page 57.

were at an end, and every one drew in as much of his capital as he could, in order to secure himself from impending danger. The table of the Directors was instantly covered with paper, and an immense circulation carried on through the Country Banks, was *at once, suddenly*, and for the *first time* disclosed. If the Directors, had recollected that through these banks the whole commerce of Britain (except that of the metropolis) is carried on, they might have seen reason to rejoice in the prosperity of their Country, instead of being alarmed at its extent. It is to be lamented that they did not enquire whether this paper circulation was founded on *real* transactions, before they restrained it as representing *fictional* ones.

It is generally understood that a certain proportion of the capital of the Bank is set apart to be constantly employed in discounting of bills; sometimes the whole of that sum is not engaged, but except upon emergent occasions it is not exceeded. The Directors of the Bank are said to have a list of the principal houses of the city, on whom bills are generally drawn, with the amount to which they will in the ordinary course of business, discount of their acceptances, set opposite to their names. The bank had been so little troubled for discounts for some years, that this list had been seldom resorted to. But when the Directors were alarmed at the sudden appearance of an immense load of paper, without making proper allowance for the happy increase of our commerce, they gave notice to some of the first houses in the city connected with country banks, that they would not discount their acceptances beyond a limited sum, and that the *number of bills drawn from the country must instantly be diminished*. This was to say in effect, that the commerce of Britain, the very source of her prosperity, must be curtailed, and reduced to such limits as the Bank of Eng-

land shall point out ; for without bills drawn upon London neither Merchants in the country can buy, nor Manufacturers sell. It was to destroy at once your whole system of finance, and deprive us of all hope of reducing the national debt, or even paying its interest in future.

To stop the course of a widely extended commerce, was more than could be done in a moment, and notwithstanding great efforts were used, the bank directors thought it necessary to repeat their cautions with perhaps too much austerity. Some of the first houses in London trembled for their own safety, and pressed their country correspondents with redoubled energy to curtail their drafts. These again communicated their situation, and the necessity to which they were reduced, to those friends who had money in their hands, or had been accustomed to pay away their paper. Then commenced a general alarm, at first without any real foundation, and a total want of confidence pervaded the commercial system. Every man suspected the solvency of his neighbour, they who had stood highest in the public estimation, were in the greatest danger, and the most distressed ; lodgements were called in, and the balance of accounts demanded. The run upon the country banks was so universal, that many were completely ruined, and more obliged to stop payment for a time. But, what is remarkable enough, and shews the solidity of these establishments, in general, only one house of any respectability in London connected with a country bank became bankrupt, and one or two others were unable regularly to fulfil their engagements. In the country it will be found that the loss occasioned by these banks has been much less than might have been expected from so severe a shock, and that *hardly any loss has been sustained from the emission of notes.* The temporary inconvenience

was universally felt, and many merchants and manufacturers of undoubted responsibility who had unfortunately over-traded themselves, have suffered, because the Banks could not afford them relief. The issuing of exchequer bills, certainly has had temporary good effects, but some persons possessed of much mercantile knowledge, have thought that the expedient will in the end be more mischievous to public, as well as private credit, than if none had been attempted. To make provision for the two last classes of exchequer bills, must fall hard upon many whose original creditors may escape without loss, through the assistance of generous friends who may be ultimately the only sufferers. The bank of England too, *when too late to prevent*, did much to alleviate the distress, and discounted liberally for all who were pressed.*

This groundless want of confidence in the resources of individuals, was followed by a more rational depression of the funds. Not less than fifty millions of national capital was annihilated, and the loss upon selling out of the stocks was so great, that few persons in trade, not in absolutely desperate circumstances, could resort to that expedient for relief. The general calamity was still further increased, by the total want or uncertainty of convoys for the exportation of our manufactures. The fatal effects of this general distress on the public revenue for the current year you have been aware of, and the issuing of exchequer bills was meant as an expedient to prevent a total derangement of your system; but the alteration lately made in contracting for the stores and provisions

* "It is indeed probable that had they applied the solid credit of that vast establishment early, and vigorously, in support of that of individuals, most of the embarrassment suffered by houses of real responsibility might have been prevented." *Reflections* page 87."

sent abroad, by paying for them not in cash, but navy-bills, proves that you have not wholly succeeded. It may be convenient in moments of emergency to raise money by issuing navy bills, but it must always be done to great disadvantage in time of war. Those of January, February, and March 1791, through some unpardonable negligence, were not discharged till about two months ago, and those of April, May, June July, August, and September 1791 are but just discharged. Monied men, calculating that those now issuing, may not be paid till two years and a quarter shall have elapsed, have fixed the discount at about 9 per Cent. For every farthing borrowed for two years and one quarter in this way, supposing nine per cent to be the rate of discount, government pays more than seven and a half per cent per annum, when if the stores and provisions were paid for in ready money, as was formerly the case, supposing that money to be raised by a loan of three per cents even at so low a price as seventy, it would pay only four and a quarter per cent interest. This is another proof of your ignorance in calculations, or of the pressing emergency of our situation.

I will not pretend to say how far the continuance of the war may operate against every effort of industry, and adventure, to repair the present depressed state of commerce. The demand of military stores from our allies, may possibly make up in some degree for the loss of foreign markets, and the poverty of foreign consumers, but it is hardly to be expected. This however I will venture to assert, that the late shock cannot be recovered in a short time, and perhaps *never*, unless the system of the Bank of England shall be understood to be changed, and liberally adapted to the existing state of things. Its funds perfectly sufficient for the exigencies of former days, we must now

presume have been found inadequate to the discounts which must be the necessary consequence of an immense scheme of trade carried on through the medium of a paper currency. It now appears that the extended commerce, and manufactures of Britain, are liable to be cut down when, and to what extent, the directors of the Bank may please to command, and consequently must be regulated by their mandates. The limitations they have imposed, begin to be understood and will in some degree be obeyed, but let me, Sir, call upon you, as you hold your country dear, to say whether it is prudent at this instant to lay the commerce of Britain under such restrictions? Their power to discount might be increased by permitting the proprietors to enlarge their capital, or by government becoming security for whatever sum, above that now set apart, the directors might be called upon in times of difficulty to employ in this manner. Or if it should be thought that one public bank is insufficient to give security to our paper circulation, another might be established at the expiration of the present monopoly.* In Scotland it has been found highly beneficial to have more chartered banks than one, and, not all confined to one place. The Merchants of Glasgow are now preparing to apply for one to be established there, and it may be found hereafter highly beneficial to institute others in the great trading towns of England. A monopoly of cash must be generally injurious both to individuals and the public. Relying upon obtaining specie at all times, upon the same terms, individuals have not thought it necessary to take precautions for their safety, as before a banking monopoly was established, and have formed, it

* By the agreement made with government in 1781, the present term will not expire till August 1812, and a twelve months notice must be given afterwards.

seems, too high notions of the credit and resources of the bank. In times of danger it is now discovered that the riches of that wealthy body are not infinite; it has been obliged to circumscribe its own payments, and restrict those of others. The effects of this measure, so fatally experienced by private persons, has affected the public also in an alarming manner.

I have before intimated that the prosperity of our commerce is indispensably necessary to our political existence; we are told that when you came into power, viz. in 1784, the annual produce of the permanent taxes up to the 5th of January, was only 10,194,259. In the last year, they amounted to 14,284,295¹. This prodigious alteration has been owing almost entirely to the rapid increase of our commerce. The following statement from "reflections on the propriety of an immediate conclusion of peace,"* (evidently taken from documents furnished by government,) almost exceeds belief. The British manufactures exported in 1789 amounted to 13,779,000*l*. in 1792 to 18,310,000*l*, making in two years, an increase of 4,531,000*l*. This may be proved also, by the increase of tonnage of english ships cleared outwards, those in 1789 amounted to 846,335 tons, in 1792 to 1,560,307 tons, so the general balance in favor of the trade of Great Britain was in 1789 only 1,519,000*l*, but in 1792, 5,449,000*l*. In this manner, has this nation, to the surprise of all Europe, been enabled in a war of seven years to add no less a sum than 115,190,000 to its national debt, and in the course of nine years, to raise upon its subjects, an annual increase of taxes to the enormous amount of 4,864,000*l*, to pay the interest. Behold the mighty consequence of commerce to Great Britain! it has shielded her from public

* See page 117..

bankruptcy, and now supports her as the most powerful nation of Europe, But there must at some time be an end of the funding system, no nation can expect to enjoy uninterrupted prosperity; even Britain cannot be always adding to her debt, because *at last she will not be able to raise the interest*. When reduced to that situation, I tremble for its approach, you may see in France what you must expect as the dreadful consequences. This event, Sir, is what you should have most sedulously guarded against, for until that time comes, or is nearly upon us, you may rely upon the affection of the subjects of Britain to the constitution. Our annual expenditure may now be stated at 17,000,000*l*, and every campaign must add 500,000*l*. for interest to it. But how is this revenue to be procured?—a languid and distressed commerce must necessarily be followed by a diminished revenue, and should that commerce not recover itself it is not easy to point out new subjects of taxation. The land is already very heavily burthened, not by the land tax only, but by the poor rates* and other charges, which give no assistance to the revenue. To meddle with the funds, might affect public credit. The Duke of Richmond indeed has pointed out a subject of taxation in case of emergency, which might be found productive, I mean *the possessions of the church*. Formerly indeed tythes and glebe lands were considered by some as the property of the church by divine right, but now it seems admitted that they are only salaries to the ecclesiastics, paid not immediately out of the public treasury, but by lands or the produce of lands set apart by *the state* for their use. These the state may resume whenever the public exigencies require it, paying to the clergy their salaries (without dimi-

* "The poor rates at Norwich owing to the stagnation of trade are said now to be not less than twelve shillings in the pound on the rack rent

nution) out of any other funds it may think fit to appoint. A bishop, or a priest, stands in no other relation to the state, than a prime minister, or a judge, they are equally servants to the public and salaried as such. The annual revenue of the church may be stated at least at 2,500,000*l.* this sold at 40 years purchase would produce 100,000,000*l.* The state might guarantee to the clergy the same salaries they now enjoy, and this vast capital would be raised at an interest of only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum, without injury to any person whatever. I know it may be said that in process of time the salaries, thus *fixed*, may become inadequate to the support of the clergy, but the legislature may always rectify any such inconveniencies as they arise. And at all events that inconvenience is remote, the advantage to the public immediate and the demand urgent.

The meeting of Parliament has been postponed till after Christmas, probably because the success of the campaign has not answered the expectations you have raised. The opening of the budget whenever it takes place can administer no consolation. A defalcation in the ordinary revenue, an empty treasury, with vast debts to be provided for, will not afford brilliant topics for your eloquence. When you shall come forward with proposals for a loan of 10 millions, when you shall state that the ordinary revenue has been exceeded by the ordinary expenditure, and that a dispirited and diminished commerce affords no *immediate* prospect of seeing them brought to a level; when you propose new taxes, or the *rendering temporary ones permanent*, to the amount of 500,000*l.* a year, to pay the interest of the loan, as the first fruits, of the first campaign of a war, to which human foresight can now prescribe no limits; when all hope of making progress towards liquidating the national debt is suspended, and the annual fund is produced only by borrowing at a higher rate than it pays

off, when the confidence in the public funds is shaken, and the apprehension that the last instalments on the commercial exchequer bills will not be paid with punctuality, prevents the full restoration of confidence; when under these circumstances those who offer to take the loan shall insist on terms, which at any other time might justly be deemed exorbitant, be not surprised if the people of England should require a strict account of your stewardship. Give us, they may say, a fair account of the public income and expenditure, let us know the worst. Tell us specifically in what manner the annual million has been provided, and satisfy us whether a system of delusion, and stock jobbing, has not given a false and temporary credit to the funds. Disclose too (they may now be disclosed) the plots and insurrections, which have been formed against the Constitution, those frightful spectres which every body has talked of, but nobody has seen; unravel the french correspondence, if any such there be, with british subjects, and point out, and punish, the traitors that have been polluted with the bribes of France, but more than all, avow *the specific object* of the war, and then inform us by what resources we shall be enabled to carry it on. It is time to awake from dreams of conquest, when victories abroad must be attended with ruin at home.

I am neither a Jacobin nor a leveller, and with my whole fortune embarked in trade, cannot wish for the introduction of anarchy and confusion here. The apprehension arising from the recent diminution of that fortune by your follies, has been the principal inducement to intrude my sentiments on the public. Self interest is a powerful incentive to patriotism. Upon your mind I have endeavoured to impress a conviction, which strongly possesses my own, *that to persist in the present war must be attended with ruin to this country.* IMMEDIATE peace may not

be in your power, but it is your duty to seek it. You may hold out to the Allies powerful inducements to give up the war, and may by the disposition of our enemies and recent events, inspire a hope that it will not be found adverse.* All that can be honestly done, ought to be done, to avert the impending danger. At home too, you ought to extinguish the causes of discontent, which you have so artfully propagated, and instead of a government supported by proscriptions, and a military force, restore to us one better suited to the genius of Britain. Let the Press be free, destroy all religious distinctions, and, if the people wish it, adopt some practicable and efficacious improvement in the representation of the people. Let these be your peace offerings. The imposition of fresh taxes must raise fresh discontents, and the security of the British Constitution, and restoration of tranquillity and good order, will be cheaply purchased at such a rate. The history of Massanello, has taught statesmen that there are bounds beyond which no government can lay taxes on its subjects, and the present calamities in France are a *practical* confirmation of that doctrine.

As a friend to all my kind, I feel great consolation in the reflection that *whatever may be the event of this war*, the sum of happiness on the earth must be ultimately increased. If the French should succeed, it may be presumed that they will establish one or more governments in a republican form, and after having expiated their crimes by long sufferings in a state of anarchy and confusion, enjoy at last the blessings of a well administered government; for the examples of Greece, and Rome, in ancient times, and of Switzerland, and America, in modern ones, prove that the

* See the Speeches of Robespierre, Danton, Barrere, &c. in the National Convention and Jacobin Club.

subjects of a republic may by *possibility* be happy; on the contrary should the combined armies be successful to the utmost extent, and no jarring interests disturb their operations, should Louis the XVIIth be placed upon the throne of his ancestors, as our Charles IInd was, *without conditions*; like him he may have a tempestuous reign, but from the temper of his subjects, and his own minority, it is not probable that like him he will finish his career of life upon the throne, but like James IInd be obliged to abdicate. Should Lord Hood and the Prince of Saxe Cobourg be gratified, and the constitution of 1789 restored, without nobles, and with a regulated clergy, it is not likely that the *ci-devant* nobles, and priests, will abstain from troubling its repose, any more than if the ancient despotism should be restored, and the nobles, and priests, return to their former possessions and privileges, the republicans, who have fattened upon their spoil, would abstain from plots, and insurrections. But after all, should heaven bless your efforts for *the prosperity of France*, and a *limited monarchy* accompanied with *full liberty of conscience*, dispense wealth and happiness among her people; will you, Sir, have been doing your duty as PRIME MINISTER, of GREAT BRITAIN? Your parasites may indeed extol your philanthropy and benevolence to the human race, but may not the subjects of Britain, groaning under fresh taxes, and lamenting the loss of kindred and friends, justly complain that so much blood and treasure should have been profusely squandered to raise up a fallen rival, and establish a competition with our own manufacturers and merchants, upon whose adventurous spirit and success, the prosperity of this country now *solely* depends?

I am, &c.

A BRITISH MERCHANT.



